



## **PRESS RELEASE**

Colorado Department of Law  
Attorney General John W. Suthers

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GANG MEMBERS AND “JOHNS” INDICTED IN DOMESTIC SEX-TRAFFICKING RING**

**DENVER** — The [Colorado Attorney General’s Office](#) announced the arrests of twelve individuals including self-reported members of the Crips gang. Eight of the twelve individuals are accused of participating in a criminal enterprise that exploited juveniles through human trafficking and pimping-related activities. Juvenile girls were posted for sale on Backpage.com and made available to “johns” for sex acts. Four of the known “johns” are also in custody, and the underage girls are receiving treatment in undisclosed locations. The criminal enterprise operated in Denver, Aurora, Commerce City, Lakewood, Parker and Colorado Springs.

“Through our strong federal, state and local law enforcement partnerships, I am pleased to report that a sex trafficking and pimping operation using underage girls has been put out of business,” said Suthers. “Moreover, the men who paid for sex with minors will be brought to justice.”

The Attorney General’s Office secured a 36-count indictment against the ring which led to the arrests of Lawrence Richard Martinez (22), Reginald James Ryan (31) and Angela Jeanine Ryan (42) who are all self-reported gang members. Robert Kenth Drinkwater-Mills (19), Lewis Jerome Smith (42) Mercedes Devon Sanders (22), Phaedra Lane Robinson (42) and Hollie Gene Mintour (40) made up the criminal enterprise. The “johns,” Hayatullah Khazi (28), Grant Richard Schoengarth (32), Richard Neil Gottbreht (63) and Nathan Theodore Hom (36) are under arrest for charges including soliciting for child prostitution and patronizing a prostituted child.

“People who get involved in human trafficking do not have regard for their fellow man,” said Denver Police Chief Robert White. “They prey on our children and take advantage others. We have to use the full weight of the law to stop these predators.”

The Rocky Mountain Safe Streets Task Force (RMSSTF) is an FBI led and funded violent crimes task force. The RMSSTF utilizes the expertise and resources of FBI Special Agents and investigators from the Denver, Aurora, and Lakewood Police Departments; Colorado State Patrol; Jefferson County and Arapahoe County Sheriff's Offices. The task force investigates abductions, crimes against children, bank robberies, fugitives, and other violent offenders. It maintains and equips an effective and efficient cadre of experienced criminal investigators, has access to sophisticated investigative techniques, and can respond on a 24/7 basis.

Within the RMSSTF, investigators work on the Innocence Lost Task Force (ILTF), a joint law enforcement partnership between the FBI, Denver and Aurora Police Departments, and Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office. The ILTF proactively identifies and rescues minor victims of human sex trafficking, while apprehending and assisting in the prosecution of those engaged in the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The ILTF actively participates in information and resource sharing in the investigation of sex trafficking cases and conducts public education to promote awareness. Innocence Lost Task Force member Sergeant Steele and his task force members led the investigation of this gang-based, domestic sex-trafficking ring and worked cooperatively with the Colorado Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Unit to indict this criminal enterprise.

"These arrests are the result of a cooperative investigative effort focusing federal, state and local resources on street predators who exploit vulnerable children," said FBI Denver Special Agent in Charge James Yacone. "The message is clear; the Innocence Lost Task Force will aggressively investigate and seek prosecutions for those who prey on the young and innocent."

The filing of criminal charges or an indictment is merely a formal accusation that an individual committed a crime. Each defendant should be presumed innocent until proven guilty. These cases will be prosecuted in Denver District Court by the Colorado Attorney General's Office in cooperation with the Denver District Attorney's Office.

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